

Message Text

SECRET

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14-11

ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

OMB-01 INRE-00 INR-05 EUR-08 SAM-01 SAB-01 SAJ-01 H-02

L-03 PRS-01 SP-02 IGA-01 SSO-00 /053 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5129

S E C R E T BEIRUT 8485

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: EX-PRESIDENT CAMILLE CHAMOUN, NOW MINISTER OF INTERIOR, REQUEST FOR GRANT AID LIGHT ARMOR FOR INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES

1 EARLY EVENING JULY 4 AS I WAS LEAVING PRESIDENT FRANGIE'S OFFICE, HIS AIDE TOLD ME THAT THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR, CAMILLE CHAMOUN, WISHED TO SEE ME IN HIS OFFICE AT BAABDA.

2. CHAMOUN GOT DOWN TO BUSINESS RAPIDLY STATING HE URGENTLY REQUIRED ARMED CARS AND ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS FOR HIS GENDARMERIE. HE HAD TAKEN OVER THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR AFTER THE BUDGET HAD ALL BEEN EXPENDED, AND HIS MINISTRY HAD NO RPT NO FINANCIAL RESOURCES. SOVIET EMBASSY IN BEIRUT IS, ACCORDING TO CHAMOUN, SUPPORTING COMMUNIST AND LEFTIST ELEMENTS HERE, AND GOL FINDS ITSELF WITHOUT SUPPORT IN WHAT CHAMOUN DESCRIBED AS QUOTE THE FINAL BATTLE WITH THE LEFT UNQUOTE.

3. I TOLD CHAMOUN I WOULD BE LESS THAN HONEST IF I WERE TO GIVE HIM ANY REASON TO HOPE FOR U.S. GRANT ASSISTANCE TO HIS GENDARMARIE FORCES. BUDGETS HAD BEEN EXPENDED AND EQUIPMENT WAS SHORT IN THE U.S.

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TO THE EXTENT THAT I HAD READ A PRESS ARTICLE THAT U.S.

TANK UNITS WERE SHORT OF ARMOR DUE TO OUR FOREIGN OBLIGATIONS. CHAMOUN UNDERSTOOD CLEARLY WHAT I WAS SAYING BUT NEVERTHELESS KEPT PRESSING ME ALLEGING IT WAS INCONCEIVABLE THAT LEBANON'S OLD GOOD FRIEND THE U.S. COULD LET THE GOL DOWN AT THIS CRUCIAL MOMENT. I TOLD HIM I WOULD REPORT FULLY TO WASHINGTON WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME BUT REPEATED MY OWN PESSIMISM THAT WE COULD HELP.

4. I ASKED IF CHAMOUN WAS SEEKING HELP ELSEWHERE, AND HE SAID THAT HE INTENDED EARLY NEXT WEEK TO MEET WITH THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO ENDEAVOR OBTAIN FAST PATROL SHIPS TO ENDEAVOR STOP LIBYAN OR IRAQ-FINANCED WEAPONS CROSSING LEBANESE BEACHES. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT BRITISH HAD SOME MOTHBALLED WORLD WAR II EQUIPMENT AND HOPED HE COULD GET SOME.

5. WHILE I BELIEVE CHAMOUN IS ACCURATE IN HIS DESCRIPTION OF SOVIET ACTIVITY HERE, I BELIEVE SOLUTION LIES WITHIN LEBANESE CAPABILITY AND SHOULD NOT RPT NOT INVOLVE U.S. GENEROSITY.

6. REQUEST, HOWEVER, INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW DEPARTMENT WISHES ME TO RESPOND CHAMOUN.
GODLEY

SECRET

NNN

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